



DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 139 383

IR 004 654

AUTHOR

Cylke, Frank Kurt

TITLE

A Proposal for International Coordination of Library Service for Blind and Physically Handicapped Individuals.

PUB DATE

Sep 77

NOTE

6p.

EDRS PRICE

MF-\$0.83 HC-\$1.67 Plus Postage.

DESCRIPTORS

Blind; *International Programs; Librarians; Library Associations; *Library Services; *Physically Handicapped; *Visually Handicapped

ABSTRACT

The chief of these services at the Library of Congress suggests that international library service for blind and physically handicapped persons be discussed at the International Federation of Library Associations (IFLA) meeting in Brussels in September 1977. Discussion would focus on the development of a proposal that IFLA establish a working group devoted to the coordination of library services for blind and physically handicapped individuals, and the following service and technical concerns: (1) development of an international inventory of library resources; (2) the need for identification and standardization of existing production formats; (3) development of an effective international interlibrary loan mechanism; and (4) the need for a coordinated application of existing and future technologies to production requirements. (Author/AP)

* Documents acquired by ERIC include many informal unpublished *
* materials not available from other sources. ERIC makes every effort *
* to obtain the best copy available. Nevertheless, items of marginal *
* reproducibility are often encountered and this affects the quality *
* of the microfiche and hardcopy reproductions ERIC makes available *
* via the ERIC Document Reproduction Service (EDRS). EDRS is not *
* responsible for the quality of the original document. Reproductions *
* supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made from the original. *

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH,
EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF
EDUCATION

THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY.

A PROPOSAL
for
INTERNATIONAL COORDINATION
of
LIBRARY SERVICE FOR BLIND AND PHYSICALLY HANDICAPPED INDIVIDUALS

by

Frank Kurt Cylke
Chief
Division for the Blind and Physically Handicapped
Library of Congress
United States of America

To Be Discussed
International Federation of Library Associations
September 6, 1977

Brussels, Belgium

Introduction

Access to information is vital if an individual is to function effectively in our rapidly developing society. Blind and physically handicapped individuals require the same accessibility as their sighted and nonhandicapped associates to data and other processed material if they are to operate personally and professionally without disadvantage.

Librarians have a responsibility to provide information in a usable form to all people. Librarians serving blind and physically handicapped individuals share this responsibility, and thus have the duty to provide data and information in appropriate tactile, recorded, and other pertinent formats.

The question before librarians, therefore, is how the information transfer process can operate effectively at local, national, and international levels. How best can librarians serve their clients who have a need for information in special formats?

Proposal

I suggest that the time is right to address at the international level library service for blind and physically handicapped people. Further, I suggest that the development of common technical and service guidelines is of prime

importance and that the International Federation of Library Associations is the organization to serve as the coordinating body.

Background

For many years library service for blind and physically handicapped individuals has had nearly as many organizational locations as there are nations. Many countries consider the service an adjunct of its welfare services and some place it in the library orbit; some utilize private organizations as service points and some utilize the public sector. I suggest that organizational placement within any specific country is irrelevant. At the same time I suggest that it is mandatory that coordination be effected within the broad scope of the library and information-science community.

Library service for the handicapped has the same philosophical base as that for the nonhandicapped. Many of the service and technical approaches are identical; those not identical are quite closely allied. Although providing appropriate library material for blind and handicapped people has necessitated the utilization of mechanical, electrical, and electronic engineering disciplines, the medium selected must be related to service and library philosophy.

Therefore, library service should be addressed by an organization of librarians such as IFLA rather than by an organization devoted to the welfare of the blind.

Action

Two levels of discussion will take place during the 1977 International Federation of Library Associations meeting.

The first area of discussion will be concerned with developing a proposal that IFLA establish a working group devoted to the coordination of library services for blind and physically handicapped individuals. The second area will address the following service and technical concerns:

1. The development of an international inventory of library resources;
2. The need for identification of existing production formats;
3. The need for standardization of production formats;
4. The development of an effective international interlibrary loan mechanism; and

5. The need for a coordinated application of existing and future technologies to production requirements.

Conclusion

It is essential that librarians serving blind and physically handicapped individuals consider the points and suggestions noted in preceding paragraphs and come together in Brussels prepared to take the first step toward integrating their service into the mainstream of library activity.